

*Washington, DC* - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today released the following statement in recognition of Earth Day.

"This year's Earth Day is filled with the hope and promise that Congress and President Obama will finally be able to move forward on critical environmental policies that will save our planet from global warming, pollution, and other abuses. It's time that we begin to wind down the oil rig and fully embrace the solar panel and other forms of renewable energy. The technology to save our planet and put the world on a path toward a renewable energy-based economy already exists. Now is the time to embrace those advances and take the giant leap forward that the United States and the world so desperately need.

"Climate change is a real threat to the future of our planet and all of us should be very concerned about its impacts on the global environment. Protecting the environment has been a lifelong passion and top priority for me. I have consistently supported efforts to: reduce pollution from coal-powered plants; set stringent standards for carbon dioxide and other pollutants; protect our waterways from toxins; raise fuel efficiency standards for automobiles; and more in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Now more than ever, the United States must take action to develop, promote, and implement policies to reduce emissions of fossil fuel generated carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

"This spring, the House will begin considering clean energy legislation that has three primary objections: creating jobs, ending our dependence on foreign oil, and combating global warming. In order to meet these goals this legislation will: promote renewable sources of energy, such as solar and wind, as well as invest in a smart grid to support efficient electricity transmission; increase energy efficiency across all sectors of the economy to reduce energy demand; and place limits on emissions of heat-trapping pollutants.

"There are many details that remain to be worked out, but I think this is a good start. I plan to be actively involved to help ensure this important legislation continues moving forward. I will also be working to make sure it sets forth strict targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and makes the investments we need in order to dramatically increase the amount of energy generated from renewable resources.

"By taking these important steps, we can create millions of clean energy jobs and make sure

that American ingenuity leads the world. In New York, we've already started to see the positive impact that The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) can have on the economy while setting us on a path toward cleaner energy. America invented solar energy, yet we are now fourth in the world in terms of production and manufacturing of solar power equipment. We can and should lead in this industry. I intend to continue working very hard to ensure that all future Earth Days are celebrated with stories about how much progress we've made as a country and a world to improve our planet for this and all future generations."